

Contingency Fund (NCCF). Distribution of relief at the ground level is the responsibility of State Governments concerned.

The Government of Uttar Pradesh have informed that relief aids to the farmers in the affected areas are distributed in accordance with items and norms as formulated by the Government of India. They have further informed that it has been ensured that the relief amount less than Rs. 1,000/- is distributed through the bearer cheques and the relief amount of Rs. 1,000/- or above is distributed through the account payee cheques to the affected persons. According to them, it had also been ensured that the relief amount is distributed to the affected persons in the presence of supervisory officers and local public representatives after due publicity in the villages. The receipt of the amount received by the affected person is signed and verified by the local Lekhpal and Gram-Pradhan as identification and kept in Government record. The list of relief amount distributed is displayed on the notice board and is read out in the open meeting of Gram-Sabha.

MSP of wheat and other Grains

259. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

SHRIMATI SYED ANWARATAIMUR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have raised the Minimum Support Price of wheat and other grains, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether this MSP restores parity between domestic and international foodgrain prices, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government would consider to have different procurement prices to ensure sufficient stocks of foodgrains if intended amount of foodgrains are not purchased on the MSP, if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) The Government has recently fixed the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) of rabi crops, including wheat, of 2006-07 season. The MSPs are as follows.

Commodity	MSP
Wheat	750
Barley	565
Gram	1445
Masur (Lentil)	1545
Rapeseed/Mustard	1715
Safflower	1565

(b) The objectives of MSP policy include the need to provide incentive to domestic producers for adopting technology and maximizing production; need to ensure rational utilisation of land and other production resources. The Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) takes into account, apart from other factors, international market price situation for fixation of the MSP.

(c) The increase of Rs. 100 for 2006-07, over 2005-06, in the MSP of wheat is aimed at ensuring sufficient stocks of foodgrains in the country. Alternative strategies, if the need arises, can be considered.

Suicides in Vidarbha

260. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that as many as seven farmers including women committed suicide in a single day in Vidarbha taking the toll to 1045 since June, 2005;

(b) if so, the steps Government have taken to provide relief to the aggrieved families in Yavatmal region in Yavatmal district;

(c) whether Government are also aware that in the month of October, 2006 only, 112 suicide cases were recorded in the Vidarbha region; and

(d) if so, whether Government would consider complete waiver of private as well as Government outstanding loans of farmers, if not, the reasons therefor?